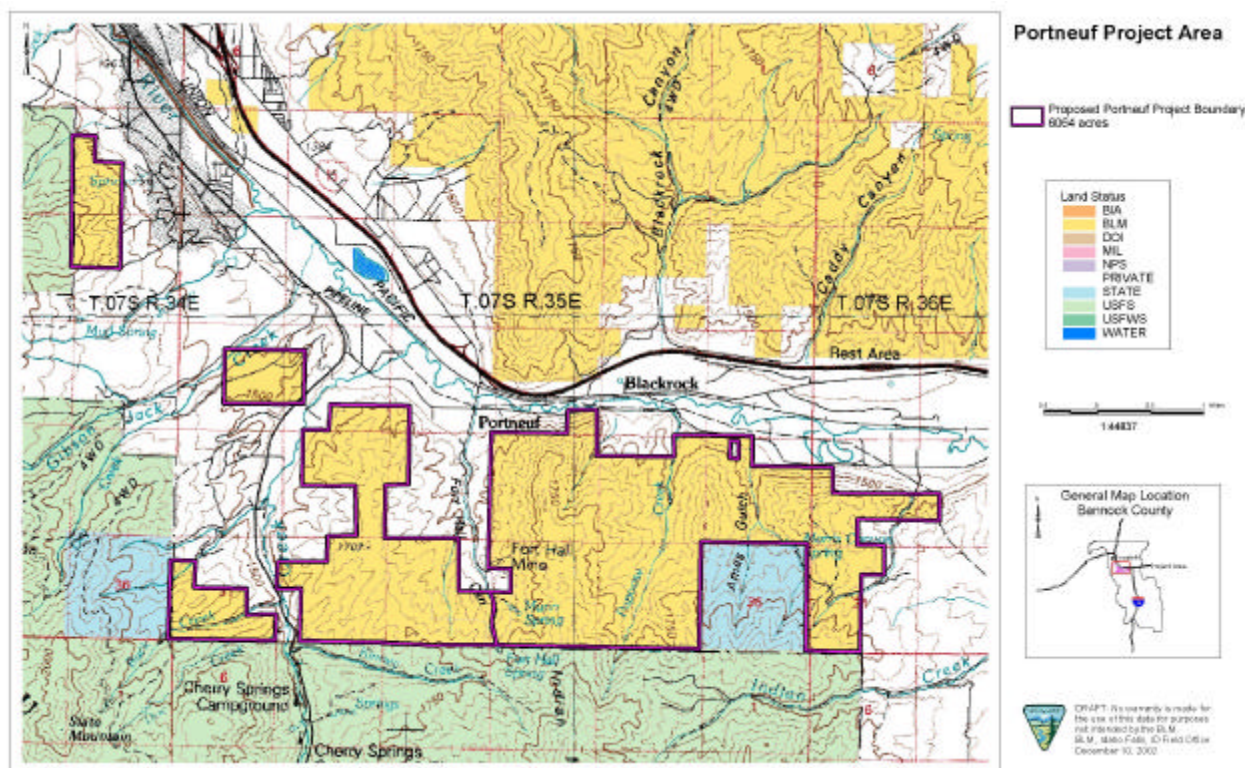


Portneuf Fuels Management Project Action Plan (1/10/03)

Project Description:

The Portneuf fuels management project is located directly adjacent to and southeast of the community of Pocatello Idaho. The Pocatello Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management proposes to create shaded fuelbreaks and reduce fuel accumulations on 6,064 acres of public lands managed by the BLM. See attached map.



Purpose and need for the project:

Decades of fuel accumulations in the high desert steppe and montane regions of Southeast Idaho has resulted in high intensity “crown fires” which can result in unacceptable public and private property loss and occasionally human injury and death.

A fuels survey conducted during field season 2002 has identified the Portneuf fuels management project area as having “High” fuel accumulations. The National Fire Plan (<http://www.fireplan.gov>) has directed the federal land management agencies to reduce, where possible, the unnatural fuel accumulations which exist on public lands.

Cinnamon Ridge Fuelbreak



The Pocatello Field Office proposes to expand a fuels reduction project begun during FY 1993 on Cinnamon Ridge to all lands located west of the Fort Hall Mine Road (Portneuf West) utilizing mechanical treatment only (no prescribed fire). Those lands east of the Fort Hall Mine Road (Portneuf East) will be treated with combined prescribed fire and (minimal) mechanical treatment.

Method/type and acreage of treatment:

Communities affected:

The Portneuf Project will reduce hazardous fuels accumulations in and adjacent to the community of Pocatello Idaho. Additional protection will be provided to unincorporated subdivisions (Gibson Jack, Mink Creek, Portneuf) directly adjacent to the community of Pocatello.

Some protection will be provided to the community of Inkom Idaho and surrounding area.

Partners and collaborators:

The following partners and collaborators have been identified to date:

US Forest Service Caribou National Forest
Idaho Department Of Lands
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Bannock County
City of Pocatello
Pocatello Fire Department
North Pocatello Valley Fire Department

Biomass generated and opportunities for biomass utilization:

Because of very limited public access, the short timeframe for initiating the project, and the low values associated with the available juniper and aspen woody materials will be chopped/chipped by brush-hog or similar mechanical equipment and left in place.

How the project will be completed (i.e., force account, contract, partners, etc.)

At the present time, it is our expectation that the treatment in Portneuf West will be by contract only. Contracts will be issued for Brush-Cutting, Thinning and Shredding Machines (e.g. “Slashbusters”) for those areas within the project where terrain and soils will allow. The remaining areas (where terrain and soils will not permit the use of machinery) will be treated by hand (contract crews conducting piling and/or “lop and scatter”). Smoke mitigation issues may prevent the use of pile burning.

Portneuf East will be treated by a combination of mechanical treatment (hopefully minimal) and prescribed fire. Prescribed fire operations will be planned and conducted by BLM fire personnel. Line preparation will be conducted by local contractors (Sho-Ban, Salmon Corps, St. Anthony Work Crews, etc.) and BLM fire crews.

Anticipated project completion date. (If project implementation is phased over several years, describe amount to be completed each year.)

It’s our expectation that the mechanical treatments in Portneuf West can be completed in 1-2 calendar years. Project objectives and terrain should allow access year round. Machine availability and weather (snow/mud) may hamper operations (hence 2 calendar years)

Prescribed fire operations in Portneuf East will be spread over multiple years to allow grazing adjustments (rest/rotation etc) and minimize impacts on critical deer winter range.

Interdisciplinary Core Team Members:

Bill Swann: Fire Use Specialist Pocatello Field Office (PFO) Team Leader
Rick Martin: Natural Resource Specialist (Inkom Allotment Manager) PFO
Ray Brainard: Forester. Biomass utilization. USRD @ PFO
Sarah Heide: Fire Ecologist East Zone USRD (fire) @ PFO
Geoff Hogander: Wildlife Biologist PFO
Cleve Davis Botanist PFO
Darwin Jeppeson Soil Scientist USRD IFFO
Nancy Fetterman: GIS Specialist East Zone USRD (fire)

Project Planning and Implementation Support Needs:

Archaeologist
Landscape Architect
Writer Editor
COR/PI (for project implementation)
Cadastral Survey

Activity	# Days	Feb 14	Mar 8	Mar 14	Mar 21	Mar 28	Apr ?	Apr 23	May 1	May 30	June 9	July 7
Public Scoping Initiation		x										
Chapter 1 (Purpose and Need, Proposed Action)		X										
1 st Public Open House/ Scoping letter return.			X									
Analysis of Comments				X								
Alternatives w/indicators					X							
Affected Environment Completed						X						
Environmental Consequences								X				
2 nd Open House to share alternatives							X					
T&E Surveys	BLM Done									FS ?		
Cultural Resource Survey/Tribal Consultation	45								x			
Initiate contracting discussions for implementation actions					X							
SHPO Concurrence if required	30									X		
Predecisional EA to Public for review	30								X			
Decision Notice/FONSI issued											x	
Issue implementation contracts												x